

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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PINCKNEY ISLAND, SOUTH CAROLINA,
DONATED TO U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Pinckney Island in coastal South Carolina, an unspoiled 4,000-acre tract, was donated recently to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to become a National Wildlife Refuge, it was announced today by Assistant Secretary of the Interior Nathaniel P. Reed.

The land was donated by James M. Barker of Chicago and Edward Starr, Jr., of Philadelphia.

The estuarine property, which includes three smaller islands nearby, contains about 2,800 acres of salt marsh, 600 acres of agricultural land, and 700 acres of timberland. Wood ducks, widgeon, mallards, black ducks, pintails, and teal visit the island's ponds. About 25 alligators live on the island along with brown pelicans, quail, turkey, deer, white ibis, egrets, little blue herons, and anhingas.

"The area has tremendous potential for an all around wildlife refuge in addition to providing protection for important estuarine values," Reed said.

The island is located in Beaufort County, S.C., adjacent to Hilton Head Island and about 13 miles from Savannah, Georgia. It's estimated value is close to \$3 million.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will manage the land and water as a wildlife refuge and as a natural and forest preserve for aesthetic and conservation purposes without disturbing the habitat of the plant and animal populations except to preserve and protect them.

Assistant Secretary Reed, commenting on the donation, said "This gift represents the best of private philanthropy. The island is a treasure house which will serve as an educational center for generations to come."

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